

CHAPTER ONE  
-INTRODUCTION  
PACKING YOUR GEAR

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## SAMPLE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE #1

It was about 3:00 a.m. and 25 degrees. During this adventure race we had already bicycled, paddled, run and walked over 180 miles. Our team had started racing at midnight the night before; we had been pushing it for over 27 hours. Brian and I had finished the race last year; and this year we thought we should race as a team of four. So, we talked Bill and Laura into joining us. Bill preferred shorter races. Laura had the personality of a tireless cheerleader. I was the team captain, lead navigator, the coach, supposed to be an expert on team building, the climbing and paddling instructor, expected to be the first one down the rappel. Now I was tired and scared.

We had not slept in two days. We had been slightly lost, then navigated our way up and down the steepest terrain in the country, every corner of the New River Gorge, in West Virginia. Now we stood on the edge of the cliff, with thick dew clouds from the

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New River 1000 feet below us. I was expected to rappel 200 feet down, then hold the rope for my teammates, so they could safely descend. I looked down into the clouds. They were as thick as mashed potatoes, harsh and cold in the yellow-white moonlight. I didn't want to do it.

Tired. Cold. Scared. The next team was 18 minutes ahead, and I knew I should just suck it up and get over the edge. We had a good chance of catching them, if only I could get my feet to move. The climbing guide said that there was a camp fire down below. Warmth. Comfort. A place to rest. My teammates said, "It's time to go. We can't miss you 'til you're gone. So get going!"

## YOUR ADVENTURE CALLING

You are on a similar edge. You are seeking adventure in work or your personal life or both. You may feel that you are about to drop into a dark, unfamiliar place. It may seem cold and scary. But, there may also be camp fires along the way.



Thankfully you are not alone. This book is like a climbing rope. It connects you to a strong anchor, safely tied to the earth. You have friends and family, a support team, loved ones who are encouraging you to take your first steps. You may have a friend or colleague that you want to coach into living a more adventurous

life. You may be a manager needing to coach your team into a new performance goal. You may be seeking a professional coach. And now you have a coach, me. We are the external forces pushing you into action.

Internally, you may also have a call for adventure. Something magnetic, stronger than gravity, may be pulling at you, forcing you to take the steps away from the familiar. That face in the mirror may have suddenly become unfamiliar. That internal force may be carrying you away from old results and patterns. The challenges in your day timer, or palm pilot, may no longer excite you. Perhaps you have had an illness or accident or loss that has shocked you. Regardless, now you know there is another way to be. And it has something to do with stepping into this adventure, your adventure, your life.

There is no need for physical adventure travel here! You do not need to leap from a cliff or raft the Colorado River. You do not necessarily need to quit your day job or vow to get married. Unless one of those steps helps you move to the next level, adventures can be quite close to home.

Your adventures may include saying “NO” when you want to, eating at an ethnic restaurant, calling four “long-lost friends” each day for a week, sleeping on the other side of the bed, inviting a challenging person to lunch, or changing the way you interact with a difficult person. You will define your adventures.

Your adventures may be internal, private, subtle or profound. Your adventure may be physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual, financial, social, or even unknown. However it calls at you, it will lead to change.

### SAMPLE ADVENTURE #2

One of my coaching clients recently shared the following story. He was a senior manager in the information technology depart-

ment of a financial services company. His story is representative of so many people working in so many professions. Perhaps even yourself.

Jeff had seen hundreds of changes in his 32 year career. Technology had forced his department, and then his company, to upgrade almost every quarter. Every day brought external threats from hungry new upstart companies who wanted to steal customers and market share. Internally, there were hundreds of people in his company who, literally, wanted Jeff's time and expertise. Years ago he had given up on the notion that he could serve everyone.

Still, he was regarded as a model of productivity. He filtered his client calls, internal calls, used automated email responses, carefully managed his time, and occasionally churned out ideas in an internal e-zine that was now posted on the company's webmail. He focused his direct attention on his supervisors and the largest clients. His time management skills led to productivity awards, more plaques on the walls. And he worked long hours. Each day his eyes became heavier. The eye fatigue that he used to feel at 5:30, he now felt at 1:30. His back problems were even more chronic.

He said, "Work is simply not as exciting as it once was. I'm still good at my job, just to be clear. I still get swept up by what needs to be done, the emergency of the moment. And I'm good at cleaning up the problems. But this morning I had a really strange thing happen."

"Strange? What was that?" I leaned forward, knowing that he rarely shared deeper concerns.

"As I drove toward the office I heard sirens. Then I saw several fire engines and rescue vehicles. I smelled smoke. Well, I imagined that I did. And while I was sitting at a red light I pondered, "What if our building had burned down? What if the company, and the hardware, all the servers, all of it were gone- just like that?"

I waited in silence, appreciating the possibilities for him.

“And guess what I did? It was pretty strange really. I just exhaled and said aloud, “That would be great!” And I knew that it would be great. No work, no stress. What a thought. Isn’t that strange? Years ago I would have run the red light just to check it out and make sure that our building was not on fire.”

## WHAT IF YOUR BUILDING WAS ON FIRE?

Faced with such an emergency, you would do whatever you needed for safety, and for other people’s safety. You would run for the doors and windows. You would bring out the valuables. You would help those who needed an arm for support. You would call your loved ones. And you would move fast!



In short, you would gather the needed resources and respond to the crisis. Just like you are doing now, with this book.

## WHAT IF YOUR LIFE WERE ON FIRE?

You may have detected a crisis in your life. Perhaps not as devastating as a fire in your building, certainly not a terrifying fire under your feet. But there is warmth and urgency for some change.

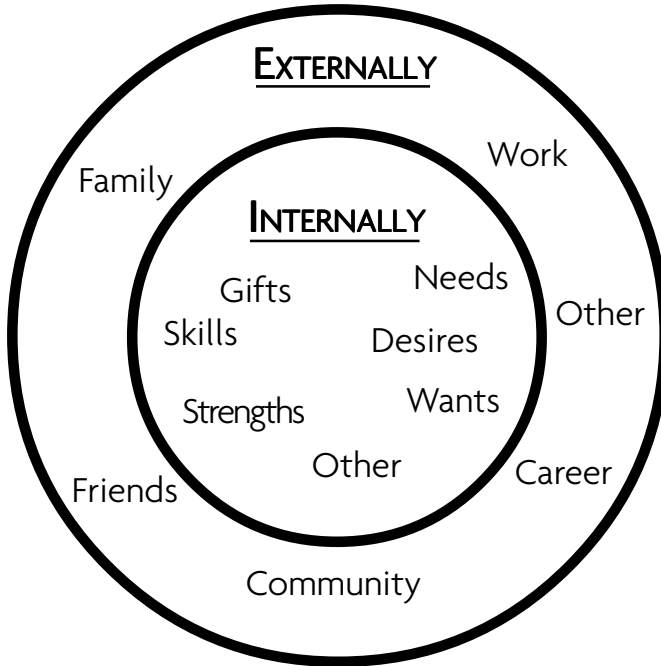
Have you ever encouraged someone to “light a fire under themselves?” As a manager and a parent and small business owner I’ve had to do so countless times.

You can light a small fire under your life. You can nurture some flames into warmth and gentle movement toward your goals. This

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book is a call to immediate action. You sense a need for change. And, like Jeff, you know the outcome will be great. You are ready to embark on your adventure.

### **MY SUPPORT STRUCTURE INCLUDES**



You have the resources in your hands. I believe that you are resourceful, capable, fully able to improve your personal or professional life. I appreciate that you are reading this book, that you have made a step toward adventure coaching, that you are ready to step into your commitment.

Like you, Teddy Roosevelt was known for risk taking. He loved wild adventures and he wanted to be known for protecting them, especially in the American West. When talking about boxing he said,

“It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly...who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who have never known neither victory nor defeat.”

Your adventure is ahead.

You will define the terms of your adventure. It may include sweat and tears as your experiences push and pull you away from the familiar. It may include outdoor risks and ropes and paddles and sails and darkness. It may include clients and endless meetings and a schedule that you cannot control. It may include children and shovels and roses and your backyard. It may include pots and pans and used clothing and serving others at work or volunteering. Your adventure may be a secret. It may be internal and reflective and a gift to your self and it may be fleeting and it may be life defining.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

1. **If you are seeking adventure**, then these pages will push, support, or provoke you to develop more self-awareness and confident actions. This book may force you to realize that you learn best by yourself. This book may help you if you feel stuck at work or in your personal life. Or, it may provoke you to contact an adventure coach to help you along the trail.

2. **If you are a coach, an educator, a manager, a therapist or parent**, this guidebook can be used as you guide your clients or students or direct reports. The exercises and activities will help you develop a deeper relationship with others. All of those exercises are listed in the appendix for easy reference. This book is designed for all of us, because we can each become a better coach, for our clients, colleagues, and friends.
  
3. **If you are one of my coaching clients, or reading this book for self help**, use this book to reinforce our work together. I invite you to flit ahead throughout these pages as you need to, like a hummingbird. The pages are numbered only for our convenience, as reference points or trail markers. Pay close attention to the travel tips on page 12.

**This book is designed for : 1. anyone seeking adventure, 2. anyone working with others.**

## WHAT IS ADVENTURE?

Adventure is defined as a journey into new territory. There will be elements of risk and reward, familiarity and novelty, challenge and comfort. Historically, the word means both “to go” and “to arrive.” Adventures require choice. We can choose to describe a situation as a challenge or as an adventure. To me, the word “adventure” has only positive connotations.

## WHAT IS COACHING?

Coaching is a professional relationship characterized by confidentiality, trust, honesty, and the client’s agenda. The coach uses a combination of art and science to help the client move to the next level in their personal and professional lives. The coach asks questions to identify strengths, resources, skills, barriers, etc.

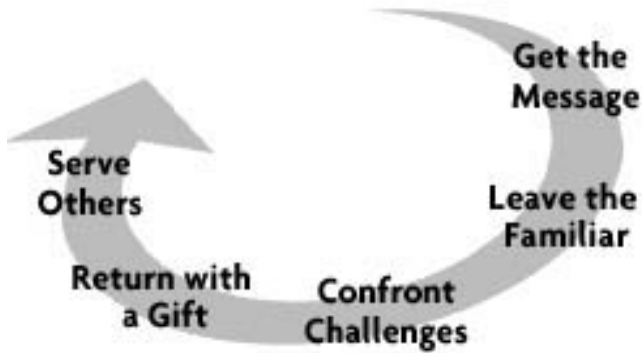
Outcomes may include:

- ✦ defining specific actions,
- ✦ increasing awareness,
- ✦ developing balance,
- ✦ committing to performance goals,
- ✦ practicing a new behavior,
- ✦ sustaining a new behavior,
- ✦ moving a client into adventure.

## WHAT IS ADVENTURE COACHING?

Adventure coaching is a structured approach to coaching that incorporates five steps to address a client's agenda. These steps define a process, a methodology, a way for each of us to journey through our adventures with more confidence.

The five steps of adventure coaching are:



Each of these five steps is described in chapters 3-7. There are explanations, sample adventure case studies from many walks of life, coaching questions, coaching models, and trail markers listed in each chapter.

This model is depicted in a circle because clients will determine the starting point. For instance, I recently presented the adventure coaching model in a seminar to financial salespeople. They started by writing about *confronting challenges* (number three). Then they

wrote weekly goals into *return with a gift* (number four) and *serve others* (number five). Then they paired up with someone and stated those points to each other. A basic skill in coaching- and in business- is to understand another person's main concerns. So, in that seminar, they helped each other *get the message* (number one) and determine how to *leave the familiar* (number two). Other clients may *get the message* and start toward their adventure goals.

Benefits of adventure coaching include:

- ✦ Easy to grasp. It is easy to understand these five steps- most people understand them quickly.
- ✦ Attractive. These steps may be attractive to anyone who feels stuck or wants to break away from current results.
- ✦ Familiarity. These five steps are familiar in a mythic way, to most people. Every hero myth, adventure story, or action movie includes these five steps.
- ✦ Useful. Adventure coaching may be a useful structure for anyone needing a behavioral change or performance measurement such as return on investment.
- ✦ Flexibility. Adventure coaching is a flexible process that can be incorporated into different coaching models from expert coaches (such as business or sports) to content coaches with specific niches (from sales to writing.) And these steps can be applied to any relationship, from parenting to therapy, managing to selling.
- ✦ Multi-dimensional. These steps may be applied to many dimensions of someone's adventure goals including professional, personal, athletic, or financial goals. They may also be applied individually to the client, in small group coaching, in training programs, and in organizational change.
- ✦ Effective. People do change. The word "adventure" literally means to move forward.

The adventure coaching model is based on the premise that each of us is on a journey, moving forward through life. Sometimes

that adventure is a desirable choice, sometimes it is not. Adventures have chaotic, muddy cold scary times, when we are not sure what to do next. Those are the times when we each need to have a coach and a support system. Those are the times when we need a guidebook.

When reading this book you may want to focus on your self at work. That may be where you spend much of your time, and your career adventure may be fascinating. Alternately, you may want to focus on your home life, parenting, or interpersonal skills. Or you may focus on life goals such as balance, fulfillment, health, finance. One of my friends is a stay-at-home father of five who says, “Until our youngest is in school this is my work. I cannot imagine doing any other adventure.” His primary adventure goal is to be a great father.

Two fictional clients are described in chapters 3-7 so that you can notice changes they make in each step of adventure coaching. These characters, Joel and Christy, are representative examples only. They are like each of us. You can use them like a mirror, for reflections into your adventure, or like a window, as possibilities for your own experience.

## TRAVEL TIPS

Before you take any leaps, get cold feet or feel frozen, let me explain a few things. When mountaineers travel down the mountain they pass along advice to novices about the challenges ahead. In the same way, when travelers abroad meet other travelers from their home they share local wisdom and news. As your coach, I offer these tidbits to you:

- ✦ *Take your time.* The forms, questions, and examples in the following pages can help you take your time. Sample and savor them, as if at a long, sumptuous buffet. You control the pace of your journey.

- ✦ *Add variety.* Skip pages or scan the anecdotes and sample adventures. There are many ideas, activities, possible steps ahead. Know that each one will help you learn something about yourself. There are many paths to your truth.
- ✦ *Reward yourself along the way.* When you complete a section or attain a goal, celebrate with a friend, special event, or a gift for yourself!
- ✦ *Keep going.* There is always “just one more ridge to get over” and the goal is always “just around the next bend.”
- ✦ *Push to the next level.* Many clients train and train and wonder why they can’t beat their personal record or make the next goal at work. Generally, they quit just before pushing through that last 5-15% of the project.
- ✦ *Notice the trail markers.* Reflect periodically along the way in this book. Here is your first set of trail markers.

## TRAIL MARKERS BEHIND:

- ✦ Your adventure calling
- ✦ What if your building were on fire?
- ✦ Form: My Support Structure
- ✦ How to use this book
- ✦ What is adventure?
- ✦ What is coaching?
- ✦ What is adventure coaching?
- ✦ Travel Tips